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LETTER DATED 26 JANUARY 1999 FROM THE CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF QATAR TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to write to you in my capacity as Chairman of the Islamic Group at the United Nations and to express the Group's grave concern and outrage over the turn of events in Kosova, in particular the cold-blooded massacre of 45 innocent Muslim civilians in the village of Racak on 15 January, during the holy month of Ramadan.

The Islamic Group, viewing this tragic event as yet another indication of the ongoing Serbian policy of ethnic cleansing in Kosova, has adopted a statement, the text of which I enclose for your perusal (see annex).

I shall be grateful if you will kindly arrange for this communication and the enclosed statement to be circulated as official documents of the Security Council.

(Signed) Ali Fahad Faleh A. AL-HAJRI
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
Permanent Mission of the State of Qatar
to the United Nations
Chairman of the Islamic Group

* Reissued for technical reasons.

ANNEX

Statement of the Islamic Group at the United Nations on the situation in Kosova

The Islamic Group at the United Nations is gravely concerned about the developments in Kosova, in particular the cold-blooded and premeditated massacre of 45 innocent Muslim civilians in the village of Racak during the holy month of Ramadan on 15 January 1999.

The Islamic Group expresses deep shock and anger over the Racak massacre, which was reminiscent of the widespread crimes of genocide and ethnic cleansing witnessed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and strongly condemns the massacre of innocent civilians and the ongoing Serbian policy of ethnic cleansing in Kosova. The Islamic Group expresses its full solidarity with the people of Kosova.

The Group:

i) Strongly condemns crimes against humanity being committed by the Serbian security forces in Kosova;

ii) Notes the Presidential Statement of the Security Council of 19 January 1999, which has been ignored by Belgrade;

iii) Urges the Security Council to take action under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter to ensure the safety and security of all inhabitants of Kosova, implementation by Belgrade of its undertakings, and implementation of the demands of the Albanian leadership of Kosova;

iv) Also notes, with grave concern, the failure of the Belgrade authorities to cooperate with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, a further indication of their continuing violation of international law, the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and of the Dayton Peace Agreement;

v) Demands full cooperation by Belgrade with the investigations being conducted by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia into the Racak massacre, as well as other crimes against humanity being committed by Serbian forces, and in bringing the criminals to justice;

vi) Demands that Belgrade adheres to the need for the full protection of lives, and that it respects the rights and properties of all inhabitants of Kosova;

vii) Demands the cessation of all atrocities and crimes against humanity by the Serbian forces;

viii) Demands the withdrawal of all Serbian forces from Kosova;

ix) Urges the international community to extend every possible humanitarian assistance to the oppressed people of Kosova; and

x) Urges for a just, comprehensive and peaceful solution of the crisis through dialogue, which should include representatives of all national communities of Kosova.

New York, 26 January 1999